GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TEXTILES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1639
ANSWERED ON:12.12.2003
ASSISTANCE TO SILK WEAVERS
KAMAL NATH

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether several silk weaving families leading a miserable life and some cases of hunger deaths have accurred during the month of August/September, 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has taken any steps to rehabilitate the poor weavers;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there enough demand for their products abroad but no credit facility is available to them; and

(f) if so, the steps taken to improve the situation?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN)

(a) & (b) No report has been received in this Ministry regarding hunger deaths or miserable condition of silk weavers.

(c) & (d) The Ministry is implementing a number of schemes for the overall development of handloom sector and the welfare of handloom weavers including those in the silk sector. These include: Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana, Design Development and Training Programme, Marketing Promotion Programme, Mill Gate Price Scheme, Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme, Weavers Welfare Schemes, Handloom Export Scheme, and implementation of Handloom(Reservation) ActAn amount of Rs. 130.83 crores was spent in 2002-03 under the above Plan schemes.

(e) & (f) There is a great deal of demand for Indian hand woven silk products in the international market including the market of USA and European Union. In general, the following steps have been taken:

i) Organization of Buyer-Seller-Meets in important markets abroad and participation in leading International fairs & exhibitions;

ii) Development and diversification of the product range by upgradation of looms and imparting of technical know-how;

iii) Dissemination of market intelligence and trade information through the Handloom Export Promotion Council;

iv) Availability of incentives to exporters under the different export promotion schemes such as Duty Entitlement Pass Book Scheme/ Duty Drawback Scheme etc.

As regards credit facility to the weavers, it is stated that NABARD is providing refinance credit facility to the handloom weavers at a concessional rate of interest, besides the loan assistance provided by the National MinorityCommission, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Commissions and the National Backward Class Commission to the targeted beneficiaries among the handloom weavers.